United Nations

Daily Highlights

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THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Force Commander of United Nations Protection Force says he is expecting Secretary-General's assessment on potential use of air strikes in Bosnia and Herzegovina; says air force should only be used as last resort.

+ Call for immediate action in Bosnia and Herzegovina made today by delegation from Organization of Islamic Conference, including possible air strikes.

+ Secretary-General to send reconnaissance mission to Rwanda, to identify ways to help implement Peace Agreement between Government of Rwanda and Rwandese Patriotic Front.

+ Foreign Ministers of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan tell Secretary-General of concern about situation on Tajik-Afghan border; call for Security Council action, including possible sending of United Nations observers.

+ Cyrus Vance begins discussions in New York with representatives of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; scheduled to meet with representatives of Greek Government.

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The Force Commander of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), General Jean Cot, today told correspondents that he was expecting to receive later this afternoon the Secretary-General's assessment on the potential use of air strikes in Bosnia and Herzegovina. A delegation from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was to meet with the Secretary-General today to present its conclusions on the matter.

He described the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina as relatively quiet since the 30 July cease-fire. A further cease-fire agreement had been signed at Sarajevo airport on 10 August, which would come into effect at the same time as the more global agreement being negotiated now in Geneva. He said the question of Mount Igman and Mount Bjelasnica was of predominantly symbolic

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value; the Bosnians were demanding that the Serb troops withdraw from those areas before they would rejoin the Geneva negotiations, while the Serbs had started drawing back logistic units and were to follow with the combat units.

General Cot said that he and the NATO Southern Europe Commander, Admiral Mike Boorda, with full endorsement by the Atlantic Council, had recommended that retaliation, if carried out, be in proportion to the offensive, with air force used only as a last resort and collateral damage restricted to an absolute minimum.

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A call for immediate action in Bosnia and Herzegovina - including the possible use of air strikes - was made today by a delegation representing the Organization of the Islamic Conference (IOC). The speakers, the Foreign Ministers of Senegal, Turkey and Tunisia and the Secretary-General of the IOC, said that they had been mandated by 51 IOC member States to convey the distress and anguish of their Governments and peoples at the tragedy that had been unfolding in Bosnia and Herzegovina over the past 18 months.

They called on the world community "to act, not merely to make pronouncements". The North Atlantic Council had approved air strikes to ensure that the aggressor's forces vacate the mountain areas that they had occupied in the last few days and that they lift the seige that they were imposing on other towns in Bosnia and Herzegovina. That action, they stated, should be taken now.

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Following the signing in Arusha on 4 August 1993 of the Peace Agreement between the Government of Rwanda and the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF), Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has decided to send a reconnaissance mission to Rwanda to assess the situation in the country. The move is in response to Security Council resolution 846 (1993) by which the Secretary-General was requested to report on the contribution the United Nations could make to assist the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in implementing the peace agreement.

The Government of Rwanda and the RPF have called for the establishment of a Neutral International Force, to assist in the implementation. The reconnaissance mission will examine the possible functions of such a force and evaluate the human and financial resources needed to carry them out. It will be composed of officials from concerned United Nations departments and will be led by Macaire Pédanou, who represented the Secretary-General at the Arusha peace talks. The mission is expected to arrive in Kigali on 16 August for two weeks of consultations with representatives of the Government and the RPF. It will also meet with representatives of the OAU and members of its Neutral Military Observer Group (NMOG II).

The senior officials of the mission will also visit Dar-Es-Salaam and Addis Ababa for consultations with the Government of Tanzania and the OAU, which acted as Facilitator and Coordinator respectively at the Arusha peace talks.

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The Foreign Ministers of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan have written to the Secretary-General concerning the aggravation of the situation on the Tajik-Afghan border, a United Nations spokesman said today.

In their letter, according to the spokesman, they asked the Security Council to consider immediately the critical situation that had arisen on the Tajik-Afghan border and to take measures to ensure its inviolability, including the possible sending of United Nations observers.

The Secretary-General last week wrote to the Heads of State of Afghanistan and Tajikistan expressing his concern about the increasing hostilities in the border region and urging all parties to exercise maximum restraint.

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Cyrus Vance yesterday began discussions in New York with representatives of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, a United Nations spokesman announced today. The talks would be followed by discussions with representatives of the Government of Greece.

Following this round of talks, the spokesman said, Mr. Vance planned to travel to Greece and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia later this month, for meetings with the Heads of Government of these countries.

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